

Remarks

In the Office Action mailed on 16 January 2008 the Examiner rejected claims 5 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as indefinite and rejected all claims (1-12, 14, and 16-20) under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Applicants' Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of Aguilar (United States Patent Number 6,199,137).

Applicants have amended claims 5 and 16 in response to the Examiner's §112 rejection. Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection under §103 and request reconsideration and withdrawal of all outstanding rejections.

35 U.S.C. §112 Rejection

The Examiner rejected claims 5 and 16 under §112 as indefinite due to use of the term "substantially". Though Applicants feel the terms is well understood by those of ordinary skill in the art, Applicants have amended both claims 5 and 16 to remove the term completely. In view of the amendment, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5 and 16 under §112.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejection

The Examiner rejected all remaining claims (1-12, 14, and 16-20) as unpatentable over AAPA in view of Aguilar.

As regards independent claim 1, the Examiner states in essence that AAPA teaches that all the recited steps are known to be manually performed but fails to teach that performed automatically. The Examiner then suggests that Aguilar teaches the disadvantages of manual configuration of an IO device (column 1, lines 39-50). The Examiner further suggests that Aguilar teaches automatically discovering devices and ports, and teaches automatically configuring routing table attributes (column 4, lines 26-49).

Applicants respectfully disagree. First and foremost, Aguilar is not related to the particulars of discovering ports of a SAS domain and automatic determination and configuration of routing attributes of devices in a SAS domain. The routing attributes (as described in the subject application) include directional information about the desired use of a port in the domain (i.e., "subtractive", "table", and "direct" routing attribute values).

Determination of these attribute values in prior manual techniques required a human thought process to determine the desired routing for each port. The automated configuring of routing attributes as recited in claim 1 requires no such human input to determine the proper routing attribute values for a port. Rather, the proper value is determined and configured automatically by a SAS device (e.g., a "SAS controller" or "SAS control element") in the SAS domain. AAPA does not suggest that such an automated determination of routing attribute values may be automated. Neither does Aguilar teach or reasonably suggest any automated technique to replace such a human determination of the proper routing attribute for a port of a SAS device. The specification and other claims further clarify that the automated process may include traversing nodes of the SAS domain to determine and configure the routing attributes of each port encountered in the traversal.

Applicants maintain that claim 1 as previously submitted clearly includes such a distinction. The automated step of configuring the routing attributes clearly implies automatically determining the values with which to automatically configure. However, in hopes of clarifying this distinction, claim 1 has been amended to clearly recite that the routing attribute values are automatically determined and then configured (also automatically).

Further, claim 1 recites that the automatically configured routing tables are used by the devices of the SAS domain. In other words, the automatically configured routing tables are distributed or otherwise shared for use by other devices (e.g., all devices) of the SAS domain. Nothing in AAPA or Aguilar teaches or reasonably suggests the automated sharing or distribution of the automatically configured routing tables such that other devices (e.g., all devices) of the SAS domain share the same routing table information. To the contrary, Aguilar appears to discuss the configuration of a single routing device - not the configuration of routing tables that are then used by other devices (e.g., all devices) of a related domain.

Thus nothing in AAPA or Aguilar (or any art of record), considered individually or in any combination, teaches or reasonably suggests the features of claim 1 wherein SAS routing attributes are automatically determined and automatically configured to generate routing tables that are used by multiple devices of the SAS domain. Applicants

therefore maintain that claim 1 is allowable over all art of record. Independent claims 10 and 14 include similar recitations and were rejected for similar reasons. Applicants thus maintain that claims 10 and 14 are allowable for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Dependent claims 2-9, 11-12, and 16-20 include additional limitations and thus are maintained to be allowable for at least the same reasons as discussed above and as dependent from allowable base claims. In view of the above discussion, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of all claims under §103.

Conclusion

Applicants have amended claims 5 and 16 responsive to the Examiner's §112 rejection thereof. Applicants have traversed and thoroughly discussed the Examiner's rejection of all claims under §103. Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 10, and 14 for editorial clarity to better protect the invention. Applicants have requested reconsideration and withdrawal of all outstanding rejections.

Applicants believe that no other fees are due in this matter. Should any issues remain, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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